

June 2, 2015
5:30 PM

The City Council of the City of Inverness met on the above date in Regular Session at 212 W. Main Street with the following members present:

President Hepfer
Vice President Ryan
Councilwoman Bega
Councilman McBride
Councilman Hinkle
Mayor Plaisted (Not Present)

Also present were City Manager DiGiovanni, City Attorney Haag, Asst. City Manager Williams, Community Development Director Malm, and City Clerk Davis.

The Invocation was given by Councilman McBride and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by the City Council.

ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

Councilman Hinkle motioned to accept the Agenda as presented. **Seconded by Councilman McBride. The motioned carried.**

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

MAYOR'S LOCAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

5)a) Citrus High School Boys Baseball Team – Council President Hepfer presented to Baseball Coach, Brady Bogart and his team a “Certificate of Achievement” for the achieving AS Class 5A District Champs and State Final Four Semifinalist. Coach Bogart expressed his appreciation to the City for recognizing them.

SCHEDULED APPEARANCES

6)a) Vietnam Veterans – Jim Stepanek, who brought the Moving Vietnam Wall to the Wallace Brooks Park during the Welcome Home Vietnam Event, addressed Council thanking them for their support and presented certificates of recognition to City Manager DiGiovanni, Sharon Skeelee Hogan, Liz Austin, Deputy Michelle Tewell, and the Citrus County Sheriff's Dept. for their hard work in organizing this event. They expressed their desire to return in 2017.

6)b) Board of County Commission Chairman Scott Adams; County Administrator, Randy Oliver; Sheriff Jeff Dawsy; Fire Chief Jim Goodworth, Randy Oliver, County Administrator, were present to provide information on the Fire Services issue as requested by City Council.

County Administrator Oliver addressed council stating that there are a couple of options including 1) the structuring of an Interlocal Agreement with the County which would

allow the county to turn over the MSTU tax collected with the City and the City would contract for the service as needed. The payments would be reduced by any of the fees assessed by the tax collector, as done with the CRA area. The MSTU would be subject to the CRA reduction. The 2) second option would be an MSBU, based upon the service provided, at the cost to be \$54 per residence, and insured that everyone paid something for fire services. Under the MSBU system, everyone pays something toward the fire service, plus the MSTU – One option would be to participate on an equal basis as others within the County. The 3) third option which has been approved by the County Commission, was for the county to create a new MSTU for Fire Services which would only include the unincorporated areas. The original MSTU was a voter approved initiative which included Inverness & the County and the only way to make the unincorporated separate was to create a new MSTU. The County would assess the MSTU, and the fee would be assessed at whatever level the BOCC deems appropriate level, based on the budget. Those are three options he sees available and we're willing to work with the City whatever way they wished to go.

Sheriff Jeff Dawsy addressed City Council and introduced Fire Chief Jim Goodworth, and the Deputy Fire Chief Craig Stevens who were available to answer questions. In talking with Councilman Hinkle and Councilwoman Hepfer, he noted the two options available. One would be the MSTU/MSBU, and the second would be a Contract for Service, similar to what is done with Law Enforcement. In the contract every time a pay raise or retirement increase comes about, it would affect the price in the contract. The document also has no provision to build a new firehouse. Presented their budget before Commission and the \$54 is still the same and the fire services tax is still within the monies generated by the fire service tax, and the assessment % did not go up. He understands the Council's concern of not being able to have ability to have input.

He spoke to the current contract with the City/Fire Dept. and current firefighter availability. He noted the MSBU presented copied for everyone and the tax roll of what every homeowner and business would pay under the MSBU.

Fire Chief Goodworth handed out a listing of all commercial properties within the city limits, noting costs based on square footage of what their MSBU fee would be for fire service, and spoke to the big infrastructure within the City, high risk buildings, and the economic impact. Approximately 8% of total call volume is within the COI which equates to about 700 to 775 calls per year. The station on Apopka's zone is larger than the City of Inverness itself. Whenever call requiring multiple unit response, they are supplemented by surrounding zones.

Councilman Ryan confirmed that 8% of calls (775) were within the City Limits of Inverness, and questioned how many were real fires. He additionally questioned if there was a cap limit on the MSBU? Goodworth noted that there are a variation of calls - County-wide they run 112-120 structure fires per year.

Sheriff Dawsy stated that the MSBU can go up to as high as \$113.

Councilman Hinkle questioned the policy on Fire Trucks assisting Ambulances to calls. Goodworth noted they are dispatched to higher critical calls.

Scott Adams, County Commissioner addressed Council and noted that he was in support of the City with the MSBU, and understands their concern. He feels with the City having its own Fire Department, that it will take some burden off the County, and better service

other areas of the County. He would be willing to help the City and be supportive and encouraged them to do what is best.

Councilman Hinkle questioned the original assessment, and if there was any differential between (for instance) a restaurant and an accountant? Goodworth noted that they have different categories for each type business and were determined by 2-3 years of responses to each category.

Sheriff Dawsy readdressed the cap on the MSBU, explaining how it was constructed. Last year the fire service tax was reduced to those who pay the tax. He spoke to a comparison of surrounding counties MSBU rates, noting how Citrus was lower.

City Manager DiGiovanni questioned the City of Crystal River dispatching agreement and Sheriff Dawsy advised that agreement is with the Sheriff/ Fire Dept. and spoke to a recent meeting with Crystal River Fire Chief. They will need 5 people for dispatching, and to personnel sick, retirement, etc., they are looking at \$2,000.

City Manager addressed Randy Oliver, County Administrator asking if the City Council decided to have its own Fire Dept., what do you see the arrangement being worked out between County and the City with the 1974 tax, collection and disbursement of tax, as well as facilities. Mr. Oliver explained that he couldn't answer on the facilities part and as it related to the MSTU. They would give the City the exact amount collected in the boundary, less the fee charged by the Tax Collector and the Property Appraiser, less any deductions made as required by State Law for the CRA. You still get the CRA money, as the Hospital would not be paying any MSTU Tax because of the way CRA is set up.

Councilman McBride stated he would like to see some hard figures gathered and presented to us, which would be beneficial in the decision making process, and follow the same pattern used for Crystal River.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING

Nancy Kratzer, 813 Balmoral Ct., Inverness addressed Council regarding the MSBU and thinks the current MSBU system is working, would like to see it continue.

Elizabeth Collins, 525 Tina Ave., Inverness –The \$54/yr is not a lot of money to continue with the current system. She stated that there was an Inverness Fire Dept. which didn't work and no sense in creating another mistake. Before creating our own Fire Dept., she would like to see the breakdown of the costs, as she can't imagine how it could be done for \$250,000.

Karen Esty, Inverness, stated that she would like to see if Inverness stays with the County, does City Council have ability to see how many employees, type of equipment. Questioned if you could back out, put a cap on it in case we wished to back out of the agreement?

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilwoman Bega motioned to accept the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilman Ryan. The motion carried.

- a) Bill Listing*
 - Recommendation – Approval
- b) Council Minutes – 05/19/15*
 - Recommendation - Approval
- c) Cemetery Lot Repurchase – Lot 634, Third Addition*
 - Recommendation – Approval

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

10)a) **Florida League of Cities – Annual Conference Ad** was addressed by City Manager DiGiovanni who addressed this year's publication of the ad for the Florida League of Cities Conference in the Quality Cities Magazine. We have increased the size of the ad to full page, at a cost of \$625, which is actually lower than last year's ½ page ad of \$800.

Councilwoman Bega motioned to approve purchase of a full page size color ad at a cost of \$625, to use this year's version for the 2015 FLC Conference Publication. Seconded by Councilman Ryan. The motion carried unanimously.

City Manager DiGiovanni additionally reported on the following:

- There will be a CIP Workshop this Thursday, June 4th @ 5:30.
- An impactful unveiling of the Valerie Theatre was conducted last Saturday and was structured to target audiences that will bring a cultural environment as well as new money into the Inverness community. This will come through the advertising and marketing of specialized events and pulling from other communities out of Citrus County.
- We will be opening Valerie Theatre this Saturday, June 6th, from 1:00-4:00 pm to the public and running advertisement of the City itself and historic visions of Inverness on the screen.
- These events are followed by Flag Day, July 3rd, etc. Businesses in downtown are getting more aggressive with Sidewalk Cafés and are being very well received with a different dynamic.

COUNCIL/MAYOR SUBJECTS

Councilwoman Bega appreciated the County coming this evening. Valerie Theatre event was very enjoyable. Look forward to the Theatre being the heart of downtown.

Councilman McBride stated that the Valerie was stunning and ladies looked great that evening. Hoped that all the citizens will come out to see the Valerie next week at the public opening. He spoke to Sunday's paper article which implied the City was going through the MSBU process due to its animosity toward the County, and felt that was an inappropriate comment. We are going to do our due diligence and this is worthy of clarification.

Councilman Ryan spoke of the how wonderful the Valerie Theatre was and how it should have the same impact to the youth of today, as stories were told of the past. He appreciates the County coming to the City and the way it was presented this evening.

Councilman Hinkle spoke of the Valerie Theatre and how grateful for the way it was designed for culture vs just a movie theatre. He wished conversation with the County this evening had occurred 2 years ago. Several comments by Vietnam Vets were great

and how wonderful the Vietnam Event was. He spoke to youth in the audience and grateful for their attendance.

Councilwoman Hepfer spoke to the Valerie Theatre and how special it was to have Valerie Hipp, and thanked the City for renovating the Theatre. She thanked the County for coming to speak with them this evening. She made positive comments about City staff.

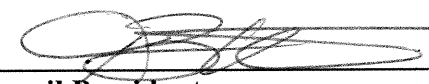
CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA

Mr Harry Kratzer– 813 Balmoral Court – questioned Fire Department response to vehicle accident, and asked if the City was going to do the same? City Manager DiGiovanni replied that the consultant who structured the program would include that but, we have also reached out to Nature Coast, and we will work out an arrangement with them to have them in the firehouse to be immediately dispatched locally. Mr. Kratzer asked if the City would be getting back the money paid into the County by the City. City Manager DiGiovanni stated that we will be pay the fees regardless and he will look into the charges the county was speaking to this evening, as those are not fee based collections, but ad valorem tax collections, which he didn't think there is a fee. He thinks there is confusion with the MSBU vs an ad valorem tax.

Meeting adjourned at 6:59pm



City Clerk



Council President